Use of Buckingham Canal for navigation

1789. SHRI V. GOPALSAMY:
DR. SHYAM SUNDAR MOHAPATRA:

Will the Minister of TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the Buckingham Canal is not at present fit for navigation;

(b) whether there is a proposal to dredge the same by the Inland Water Transport Authority;

(c) if not, what are the reasons therefor; and

(d) what other steps are being envisaged by Government to make it navigable in the near future?

THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT (SHRI BANSI LAL): (a) and (b) The Buckingham Canal is navigable by country craft in certain stretches. Inland Waterways Authority of India has not been constituted yet.

(c) and (d) It is proposed to make a comprehensive feasibility study of the entire canal system including the Buckingham Canal for navigation between Madras and Kakinada, with the assistance of the Government of Federal Republic of Germany. After knowing the results of the feasibility study, developmental works will be taken up for implementation. Funds have been provided in the Seventh Five-Year Plan for development of this canal.

Enforcement of Dowry Prohibition (Amendment) Act

1790. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government have sought the cooperation of the State Governments in giving due publicity for the enforcement of the Dowry Prohibition (Amendment) Act, 1984;

(b) whether any letter has been issued to the Chief Secretaries of the States;

(c) if so, what are the details thereof;

(d) what is the State Governments' response thereto; and

(e) what efforts are being made by the Central Government to enforce the Dowry Act?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS AND WOMEN'S WELFARE (SMT. MARGARET ALVA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The gist of the letter explains the provisions of the Amended Act and also indicates areas where the cooperation of the State Governments is required. Some of the points on which the State Governments' attention has been drawn are:—

(1) Any property or other valuable security given or agreed to be given in connection with a marriage to the bride or bride-groom or any other person will be dowry.

(2) The penalty for giving or taking dowry has been enhanced and might vary from imprisonment for a period of six months to two years and a fine of Rs. 10,000 as against Rs. 5,000 provided in the original Act.

(3) The amended Act makes it possible for recognised welfare institutions or organisations to lodge complaints about dowry offences and for Courts to take cognizance of such complaints.

(4) The Act applies to all persons irrespective of the region to which they belong.

(5) The main instrument for the enforcement of the Act, is a list of presents to the bride or the bridegroom given at the time of marriage and to be maintained in accordance with the rules under the

Act notified in he Gazette of India Extraordinary dated August 19, 1985.

(6) Failure to maintain the lists of presents in accordance with the rules or failure to enter any present in the List would have the effect of making all the present(s) as not entered in the list "dowry" for the purpose of Section 3 of the Act and the giver and the receiver would become liable to punishment for giving or taking dowry.

(7) The lists of presents may be registered under the Registration Act, 1980.

(8) The rules make it incumbent for the bridegroom to maintain the list, which should contain a brief description of each present, its approximate value, the name of the person who has given it and where the present was given by a relation of the bride or the bridegroom, a description of such relationship.

(9) The State Governments have been advised to explore the possibility of having mobile registration offices at periodical intervals for facilitating easy registration of lists of presents.

(10) Dowry is a deep-rooted evil and it would be possible to eradicate it only by carefully planned action.

(d) The State Governments have assured all cooperation in implementing the Act.

(e) The Department of Women's Welfare has addressed all the State Governments/Union Territories to implement the provisions of the amended Act and also to take up a publicity campaign in the States in cooperation with various Voluntary Organisations working in the field so that the contents of the amended Act are made known to each and every person living in their States.

Free use of permits for trucks

1791. SHRI T. CHANDRASEKHAR REDDY: Will the Minister of TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that according to a study conducted by the National Institute of Training in Industrial Energy the Railways were found to be the most efficient form of transport in terms of energy consumption;

(b) if so, what are the reasons for the decision of the Transport Development Council regarding free use of permits for trucks; and

(c) whether this decision is likely to affect adversely the Railway freight traffic and its revenue?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) to (e) The Planning Commission had set-up a National Transport Policy Committee, which submitted its report in May, 1980. For its deliberations, the National Transport Policy Committee had got certain studies done by different organisations. One of these studies was conducted by the National Institute of Training in Industrial Engineering. In the report of this study, it was inter-alia observed that for freight electric traction Railways is the most efficient form of transport in terms of energy consumption, followed in that order by Railway driven by diesel traction, pipeline, inland water trans-Port of this study, it was *inter-alia* steam traction. After taking all relevant factors into account, the National Transport Policy Committee had recommended that in the interest of smooth inter-State freight traffic, there should be no restriction on the issue of National, Zonal and other inter-State permits but full taxes for all concerned States should be realised at one point in the Home-States.

The above recommendation was also discussed in detail in a meeting of the Transport Development Council. The Council recommended that